

Lawmakers promise to ensure Medicare's survival for future generations

GREECE, NY – Today, Representatives Kathy Hochul (NY-26) and Louise Slaughter (NY-28) celebrated the 45th Anniversary of the implementation of Medicare at the Greece Community and Senior Center.

“One of the greatest accomplishments America ever achieved was the passing of Medicare,” said Congresswoman Hochul. “Before the implementation of this crucial program, nearly half our seniors lived without healthcare and nearly one-third of seniors lived in poverty. Today, Americans are under attack by the Republican budget that would decimate Medicare. Instead of reforming Medicare and ensuring Medicare's solvency, the supporters of the Ryan budget want to turn Medicare into a voucher program that would break the promises made to our seniors over 45 years ago.”

“President Johnson's signature on the legislation that formed Medicare changed the dynamic, the very fabric, of our American society,” said Congresswoman Slaughter. “Forty-five years ago we made a sensible promise between citizens of this great nation: that if you worked hard and paid into the system, you could retire with stability, economic security, and peace of mind. It has made lasting improvements to our nation's health care system and the quality of life of seniors by making health care more affordable and accessible. Unlike the House majority I believe it is worth defending.”

On April 15, 2011, the House majority passed the Ryan budget that would transform Medicare from guaranteed health care for seniors into a voucher program that would require Americans, now under age 55, to buy private insurance when they turn 65. This voucher program would reduce benefits, raise costs, and force seniors to argue with insurance companies for coverage.

Representative Slaughter voted against the measure and Representative Hochul actively campaigned against the plan, arguing that it would roll back the promise made to America's seniors.

Instead of ending Medicare as we know it, Representatives Hochul and Slaughter support cutting the underlying costs of health care; ensuring the long-term solvency of the program that millions of American seniors have come to rely on.

The two support leveraging the purchasing power of prescription drugs; removing waste, fraud and abuse; and implementing tele-health services to save time and costs.

Today, Medicare provides comprehensive health care coverage to 47 million Americans, including 39 million seniors and 8 million people under 65 with disabilities. Medicare provides a guaranteed set of benefits, at affordable premiums.

President Lyndon Johnson signed Medicare into law on July 30, 1965, and it was first implemented on July 1, 1966, when enrollees first entered the program.

[Download a document about the Ryan Budget's effect on Medicare recipients in the 26th and 28th Congressional Districts](#)

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